



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Teton
National Park

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Grand Teton National Park News Release

Rangers Respond to Both Highway and Mountain Accidents

Grand Teton National Park rangers were busy yesterday afternoon and evening, August 17, as they responded to a vehicle collision south of Gros Ventre Junction and an injured climber at the Lower Saddle between the Middle and Grand Teton. The traffic accident happened on Highway 26/89/191 at 2:20 p.m., and the mountain accident took place around 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday afternoon, rangers responded to a cell phone call made by a passing motorist that a serious traffic accident had just occurred on Highway 26/89/191 near the turnout at the park's south boundary. A southbound, semi tractor-trailer driven by Corry Bassett, age 27, of Afton, Wyoming, struck the rear of a Mercury Villager minivan driven by Ernest Schreiner, age 44, of Gillette, Wyoming. The force of the impact caused Schreiner's minivan to leave the pavement, rotate 180 degrees, and roll onto its roof before coming to rest in the sagebrush off the side of the road. Schreiner and his 20-year-old son, Matt, were wearing seat belts and escaped serious injury; however, both men were transported by park rangers to St. John's Medical Center in Jackson for treatment of other injuries.

The accident occurred when traffic began to slow down through an area of road construction just north of the park's boundary. Bassett was apparently unable to slow down his semi truck before colliding with the rear-end of Schreiner's minivan. After hitting the Mercury Villager, Bassett's tractor-trailer blocked both lanes of traffic. Park rangers closed the highway for approximately 20 minutes to clear the semi truck from the road and conduct an investigation of the accident. Rangers then provided traffic control for approximately 2 more hours, keeping the highway open while further investigation took place and the disabled minivan was removed from the scene.

Exum Mountain Guides called park rangers at 7:20 Tuesday evening to report that a falling rock had struck and injured the leg of one of their clients, Anthony J. Chereso, age 41, of Schaumburg, Illinois, while he was climbing near the lower end of a fixed rope below the Lower Saddle. Exum guides provided emergency medical care to the injured Chereso and assisted him in reaching an overnight hut located on the Lower Saddle. Due to his injuries, Chereso was not able to walk further. The park's contract helicopter, returning from another assignment, was diverted to the area to evacuate the injured climber. Chereso was air-lifted from the Lower Saddle at approximately 8:10 p.m. and taken to the Lupine Meadows rescue cache where he was then transported by Exum staff to St. John's Medical Center for further treatment.

This helicopter evacuation marks the twelfth major search and rescue effort in Grand Teton National Park this year.

Grand Teton National Park 75th Anniversary ~ 1929-2004
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